

Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY NEA/ARN:MDRAPER:PDW

APPROVED BY P:PHABIB

NEA:ALATHERTON, JR.

S/S:MR. GAMBLE

D:DLAMB

S:MR. TARNOFF

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 104416 TOSEC 040061

EXDIS, FOR THE SECRETARY FROM HABIB

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IZ, US

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM: IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH
IRAQ (S/S NO.7712288)

1. ISSUE FOR DECISION:

YOU HAVE ASKED FOR OUR SUGGESTIONS ON NEW INITIATIVES WE
MIGHT NOW TAKE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH IRAQ. THIS MAY BE
AN IDEAL TIME TO MAKE A SPECIAL GESTURE. THE IRAQIS
CLEARLY WERE IMPRESSED WITH OUR PROMPT RESPONSE TO STRONG-
MAN SADDAM HUSSEIN'S REQUEST FOR A TOP-NOTCH MEDICAL TEAM
TO EXAMINE HIS BACK PROBLEM. THE CHIEF OF OUR INTERESTS
SECTION IN BAGHDAD IN FACT HAS SUGGESTED THAT WE TAKE
ADVANTAGE OF THE PRESENT FAVORABLE ATMOSPHERICS DEVELOPED
THROUGH THE TEAM'S VISIT TO PROPOSE TO IRAQI OFFICIALS THAT
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YOU PAY A VISIT TO BAGHDAD ON YOUR NEXT VISIT TO THE MIDDLE
EAST AREA.

2. OUR VIEW IS THAT YOU SHOULD NOT OFFER TO GO TO BAGHDAD
SINCE IT WOULD CAUSE PROBLEMS WITH THE OTHER PERSIAN GULF
STATES IF YOU DID NOT VISIT THEM ALSO. MOST OF THESE
STATES ARE FAIRLY FRIENDLY TO THE U.S. AND EITHER FEAR OR

DISLIKE THE IRAQIS.

3. THERE IS, HOWEVER, AN ALTERNATIVE SCENARIO WHICH I BELIEVE WORTH TRYING OUT. THIS WOULD INVOLVE HAVING THE CHIEF OF OUR INTERESTS SECTION INFORM THE IRAQIS THAT WE ARE INTERESTED IN IMPROVING RELATIONS, INCLUDING THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC TIES. HE WOULD OFFER, AS A FIRST STEP, THAT I VISIT BAGHDAD DIRECTLY FROM TEHRAN. AS AN ALTERNATIVE OR COMPLEMENTARY STEP, HE WOULD SAY YOU WOULD BE PLEASED TO RECEIVE THE FOREIGN MINISTER OR ANY OTHER SENIOR OFFICIAL EMISSARY IN WASHINGTON OR AT ANOTHER MUTUALLY CONVENIENT LOCATION. THE PROPOSED TELEGRAM TO BAGHDAD IN PARA 6 BELOW SPELLS OUT THE LINE OUR REPRESENTATIVE IN BAGHDAD WOULD BE INSTRUCTED TO TAKE.

4. IF YOU APPROVE THIS APPROACH, WE WILL NEED TO GIVE CAREFUL ATTENTION TO HOW WE HANDLE IT WITH OTHER AREA STATES SO THAT THEY WILL NOT MISINTERPRET OUR INTENTIONS. WE HAVE ALREADY SOUNDED OUT EGYPTIANS, JORDANIANS AND SYRIANS, WHO AS YOU KNOW POSED NO OBJECTION TO OUR SEEKING TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH IRAQ. YOU HAVE ALSO INDICATED TO ZAHEDI THAT YOU WILL WANT TO DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT WITH THE SHAH. IF YOU AGREE TO THIS APPROACH TO IRAQIS, I BELIEVE WE SHOULD SIMULTANEOUSLY INFORM ALL OF FOREGOING PLUS SAUDIS. I WOULD ALSO RECOMMEND INFORMING ALGERIANS AT SAME TIME AND SUGGESTING THEY MIGHT WANT TO ENCOURAGE IRAQIS TO BE RESPONSIVE, GIVEN FACT THAT THEY PROBABLY HAVE BETTER RELATIONS WITH IRAQIS THAN ANY OTHER ARABS AND THAT
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I RECENTLY MET WITH BOUMEDIENE. IF IRAQIS AGREE TO MY TRIP, WE SHOULD OF COURSE THEN INFORM THE REMAINING ARAB STATES AND ISRAEL AND EXPLAIN THE RATIONALE FOR MY TRIP.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS:

(A) THAT YOU APPROVE THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE INSTRUCTING OUR INTERESTS SECTION TO SOUND OUT THE IRAQIS ABOUT A VISIT BY ME:

APPROVE..... DISAPPROVE.....

(B) THAT, IF YOU APPROVE THE INSTRUCTION TO BAGHDAD, YOU ALSO APPROVE THE SCENARIO IN PARA 4 ABOVE FOR INFORMING OTHER GOVERNMENTS.

APPROVE..... DISAPPROVE.....

6. PROPOSED MESSAGE TO BAGHDAD:

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ACTION ADDRESSEE: IMMEDIATE BAGHDAD

EXDIS, FOR WILEY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IZ, US

SUBJECT: IMPROVING U.S.-IRAQI RELATIONS

REF: BAGHDAD 743

PLEASE GET IN TOUCH WITH HIGHEST POSSIBLE LEVEL OF
FOREIGN MINISTRY TO MAKE FOLLOWING DEMARCHE, WHICH
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PARALLELS SUGGESTIONS YOU MADE REFTEL.

--THE NEW ADMINISTRATION IN WASHINGTON, IN KEEPING WITH
ITS DESIRE FOR THE WIDEST POSSIBLE GOOD RELATIONS AROUND
THE WORLD, WOULD LIKE TO TAKE STEPS TO IMPROVE U.S.-IRAQI
RELATIONS AND IS PREPARED TO RESUME DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS
WITH IRAQ WITHOUT PRE-CONDITIONS.

--AS A WAY OF BEGINNING THIS PROCESS, SECRETARY VANCE
WOULD BE PLEASED TO SEND UNDER SECRETARY PHILIP HABIB
TO VISIT BAGHDAD FOR TALKS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER HAMMADI
AND OTHER OFFICIALS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THEIR FORTHCOMING
VISIT TO TEHRAN. IF THIS IS ACCEPTABLE TO THE GOVERNMENT
OF IRAQ, MR. HABIB COULD ARRIVE IN BAGHDAD ON OR ABOUT
MAY 15 FOR APPROXIMATELY TWO DAYS.

--MR. HABIB WOULD BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS WAYS OF IMPROVING
U.S.-IRAQI RELATIONS INCLUDING THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF
DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. HE WOULD ALSO BE PREPARED TO DIS-
CUSS REGIONAL MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST, TO DESCRIBE
AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION AND A
SETTLEMENT OF THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT, AND WOULD WELCOME
LEARNING AT FIRST HAND IRAQI VIEWS ON THESE QUESTIONS.

--MR. HABIB WOULD ALSO BE IN A POSITION TO GIVE ASSURANCES
THAT THE USG IS NOT SUPPORTING AND WILL NOT IN THE FUTURE
SUPPORT KURDISH DISSIDENT ACTIVITY AGAINST THE IRAQI
GOVERNMENT.

--MR. HABIB HAS BEEN ENGAGED IN SIMILAR SPECIAL MISSIONS
AIMED AT EXCHANGING VIEWS WITH IMPORTANT GOVERNMENTS AND

THEREBY STRENGTHENING OUR RELATIONSHIPS. ON HIS RECENT VISIT TO ALGERIA, MOROCCO, AND TUNISIA, MR. HABIB WAS RECEIVED BY THE RESPECTIVE CHIEFS OF STATE, PRESIDENT

BOUMEDIENE, KING HASSAN AND PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA.

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--IN ADDITION TO OFFERING TO SEND MR. HABIB TO BAGHDAD, SECRETARY VANCE WOULD BE PLEASED TO MEET WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER AT AN EARLY OCCASION SHOULD HE BE PLANNING TO VISIT THE UNITED STATES OR AT ANOTHER MUTUALLY AGREEABLE LOCATION, OR TO RECEIVE ANY SENIOR EMISSARY THE IRAQI GOVERNMENT MAY WISH TO SEND TO WASHINGTON TO DISCUSS IMPROVEMENT IN OUR RELATIONS.

FYI: YOU WILL APPRECIATE THAT HABIB MUST BE RECEIVED BY FOREIGN MINISTER HAMMADI AT THE VERY LEAST. PLEASE REPORT IRAQI REACTIONS SOONEST.

END MESSAGE.

7. DRAFTED BY: NEA/ARN:MDRAPER. CLEARANCES:
NEA:ALATHERTON, JR., D:DLAMB, P:PHABIB, S:PTARNOFF. CHRISTOPHER

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